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In Memoriam.

PRINCE PAUL DEMIDOFF,

MORT LE 26 JANVIER, 1885.

R. I. P.

Temoignage de Reconnaissance

DE LE PART DE

H. GUEDALLA, DE LONDRES,

POUR SON TRAITEMENT HASILE DE LA

"QUESTION D'OR EN RUSSIE,"

QUESTION QUI INTERESSA PLUS DE
TROIS MILLION DE

SOUS



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PRÉFACE.

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MADAME JULIETTE ADAM de la *Nouvelle Revue* a protesté par l'habile et généreuse lettre qui suit, adressée au *Figaro* de Paris, contre les articles biographiques qui ont paru récemment au sujet du Prince Demidoff, où les écrivains auraient ignoré complètement sa noble carrière pendant les dernières dix-neuf années de sa vie. Madame Adam prouve qu'elle est avant tout et surtout femme de cœur. Il y a eu des convertis du plaisir à la pénitence depuis Saint Augustin. Prince Paul Demidoff en était un. Dans les neuf ans récemment écoulés il a dépensé £145,000 pour divers établissements de bienfaisance et d'instruction. Ses donations particulières aux pauvres de St. Pétersbourg et ailleurs sont bien notoires, et ses mines d'or et ses Usines à fer de l'Ural fournissent un emploi régulier à 13,000 hommes. J'ai traduit en langue anglaise l'habile défense du feu Prince par

Madame Adam, afin de démontrer—suivant son intention—à la noble veuve Princesse Demidoff, que nous désirons dépeindre son intelligence, si longtemps associé “ avec l’intelligence purifiée de son mari et sa bonté utile avec sa bonté facile,” comme témoignage de reconnaissance à présenter un jour à leurs enfants.

J’ai remis dans le temps au Prince Paul un exemplaire, magnifiquement relié, de la traduction faite à mes frais de sa “ Question Juive en Russie, et au commencement du mois de Mai de 1884, il m’a envoyé depuis Pratolino, le télégramme suivant :

“ J’ai reçu votre envoi. Je suis extrêmement flatté qu’un simple petit ouvrage comme le mien aura été estimé si au-dessus de sa valeur. Agréez l’expression de ma profonde reconnaissance.”

II. GUEDALLA.

10 *Février*, 1885.

P.S.—“ Par décret royal, en date du 31 décembre 1884, S. M. le roi d’Italie a accordé le titre de prince à tous les fils et filles de M. Paul Demidow, avec cette dis-

inction que l'ainé porterait le titre de Prince de San-Donato et les autres celui de Princes et de Princesses Demidow de San-Donato.

“Sa dépouille mortelle a été embaumée et, par autorisation spéciale du préfet, déposée provisoirement dans la chapelle des Médicis dans le parc de Pratolino où le Prince de San-Donato faisait célébrer tous les dimanches à ses frais la messe pour les domestiques catholiques et pour les habitants du village voisin.

“Pour comprendre la grave perte que vient de faire Florence, il suffit de dire que, outre les énormes libéralités que cette ville doit au défunt, il dépensait pour sa maison 100,000 francs par mois.

“La junte municipale, dans sa réunion d'hier, a voté une adresse de condoléance à M^{me} Hélène Demidow, Princesse de San-Donato, au nom de la ville de Florence.”

A Monsieur MAGNARD,
Rédacteur en chef du FIGARO.

MON CHER AMI,

Voulez-vous me permettre, après la résurrection bruyante qu'on a faite du Prince Paul Demidoff et de sa "gaie jeunesse," de vous présenter un autre Paul Demidoff, celui que j'ai connu, qu'ont aimé et estimé un grand nombre d'amis, celui enfin que pleure sa veuve ?

Même au moment de ses plus grandes joyeusetés, le Prince Paul Demidoff avait toujours trouvé quelques heures par semaine pour étudier sérieusement avec des hommes qui s'appelaient : Laboulaye, Franck, Baudrillart.

En 1867, un mariage d'amour avec la Princesse Marie Metchersky l'arrachait à sa vie de plaisir. Il passait en même temps de l'ambassade de Paris à celle de Vienne. En 1868, il eut la douleur de perdre la princesse, après la naissance d'un fils encore vivant aujourd'hui.

A partir de ce jour, ses goûts se modifièrent complètement. Des amis se souviennent encore de

l'impression profonde que fit sur Paul Demidoff cette mort si imprévue. La bienfaisance devint son unique souci, sa seule occupation. Il fonda à Paris l'ouvroir Sainte-Marie, où, jusqu'à la Commune, 3 à 400 femmes du peuple parisien trouvaient l'ouvrage de chaque jour et une vie à l'abri du besoin.

Retourné en Russie vers 1869, il reprit du service au ministère de l'intérieur, et accepta une position inférieure en province, dans la petite ville de Kamenetz en Podolie. Mais en 1870, la ville de Kieff, qui avait obtenu l'autorisation d'élire son maire, vint le chercher à Kamenetz et le plaça à la tête de la troisième ville de Russie par son importance politique et commerciale.

En 1871, Paul Demidoff se remariait et épousait la jeune princesse Hélène Troubetzkoï qu'il amenait à Kieff. C'est la veuve qui le pleure aujourd'hui et dont tous les instants, toutes ses pensées ont été consacrés au bonheur de son époux. Il lui reste la consolation d'avoir fait adorer la vie de famille et la joie d'un intérieur idéal à son regretté mari et le soin d'élever les cinq petits enfants qu'il lui laisse, ainsi que l'aîné, fils de la Princesse Marie Metchersky.

Retracer le bien que Paul Demidoff a fait à la ville de Kieff serait trop long: après la mort du premier enfant de la Princesse Hélène Nikita, il fonda un hôpital d'enfants; l'Université et la ville ont été comblés de ses bienfaits. En 1874, il revint à Pétersbourg, puis à San Donato, qu'il continuait à enrichir d'objets d'art. En 1877 à l'ouverture de la guerre de

Turquie, il fut renvoyé à Kieff, qui l'avait élu une seconde fois maire en 1874, charge qu'il ne put accepter.

Le gouvernement le nommait alors envoyé extraordinaire des établissements fondés par la Croix rouge pour porter secours aux blessés et aux malades de l'armée. Pendant un an et demi, il consacra son temps à la Croix rouge à Kieff et dans deux autres gouvernements de la Russie; sa conduite à cette époque dépassa en dévouement, en générosité, tout ce qu'on pourrait redire. Il rentra à Pétersbourg en 1880 où il avait été nommé en 1873 aux fonctions de veneur de la Cour.

En 1881, à la mort de l'empereur Alexandre II., il reprit un service plus actif au ministère de l'intérieur. Son activité se porta sur tous les sujets qui intéressèrent la Russie.

Président d'une des plus puissantes banques de Saint-Pétersbourg (la banque russe), président de la Société d'encouragement pour l'industrie et le commerce, il étudia la question juive et toutes les questions à l'ordre du jour. Les mines de l'Oural lui prenaient la plus grande partie de son temps. Il y introduisit peu à peu toutes les méthodes les plus nouvelles, précédant toujours de quelques années les désirs du gouvernement.

A ses risques et périls, il commença l'exploitation des houillères du Nord de l'Oural, prévoyant que ce serait un jour la seule ressource d'un centre minier s'appuyant aujourd'hui exclusivement sur des richesses forestières qui menacent de s'épuiser.

Toujours prêt à s'occuper d'œuvres de bienfaisance, il fut nommé par l'empereur Alexandre II. curateur des établissements de bienfaisance Demidoff, fondés par un de ses aïeux ; continuant ses services de cour, il était désigné pour accompagner en Russie le roi d'Italie alors Prince de Piémont, et la Princesse Marguerite.

Il avait reçu du roi Victor Emmanuel le titre reconnu en Russie de Prince de San Donato, et, successivement, les deux grands cordons de Saint-Maurice et Lazare, et de la couronne d'Italie.

Le peuple de Florence lui offrit en 1879 une médaille en or avec son effigie et celle de la Princesse, accompagnée d'une adresse qui fut portée à San Donato par le comité organisateur. Le cortège se composait pour cette solennité de toutes les corporations ouvrières de la ville avec leurs drapeaux, et la municipalité de Florence nomma, cette même année, le Prince et la Princesse citoyens honoraires.

Il avait reçu en Russie, à différents moments de sa vie, des preuves de confiance, des adresses, des remerciements et le grand cordon de Stanislas.

Il n'oubliait pas l'Italie, où il avait acheté une superbe propriété des Médicis, Pratolino, qu'il remplissait d'objets d'art, comme il avait fait autrefois à San Donato.

Il continuait à Florence cette activité de bienfaisance qu'il appliquait partout, écoles, cuisines économiques, asiles de nuit, éducations, bourses, secours. On peut affirmer que jamais personne ne

frappa inutilement à la porte du Prince Paul Demidoff.

La France, pour reconnaître sa générosité pendant la guerre de 1870, et sa sollicitude constante pour les Français à Saint-Pétersbourg, l'avait nommé commandeur de la Légion d'honneur.

Depuis plusieurs années il souffrait d'une sérieuse maladie de foie. Une grande amélioration survenue il y a deux mois faisait espérer sa guérison. Tout l'attachait à une vie consacrée exclusivement à des sentiments de famille, à son affection pour sa femme, qu'il adorait, à ses enfants qu'il ne quittait pas, quand le 24 janvier il perdit connaissance, après avoir dit à la princesse un seul mot: "au revoir!" où il mit toute l'expression de sa reconnaissance et de son amour. Il mourut le 26, à trois heures et demie, laissant tous les siens désespérés. Enterré dans la chapelle de Pratulino, son corps sera, d'après ses derniers désirs, transporté dans ses usines de l'Oural, au mois de juin; sa veuve l'accompagnera dans ce dernier voyage, certaine de trouver des consolations parmi les cœurs simples qui ont aimé Paul Demidoff comme un bienfaiteur.

Permettez-moi, mon cher ami, de terminer par une remarque. Il me semble que les hommes des classes supérieures, qui veulent conquérir une situation ou une individualité exceptionnelle, se divisent pour la plupart en deux catégories: les laborieux, qui, une fois parvenus au faite de leurs ambitions, essayent de retrouver le temps perdu pour le plaisir, et les

viveurs, qui, lassés du plaisir, essayent de retrouver le temps perdu des joies saines, recherchent le travail et s'y consacrent.

Le Prince Paul Demidoff appartenait à la catégorie de ces derniers. Ceux qui ont parlé des amis de sa jeunesse étaient certainement en droit d'en rappeler les erreurs. Mais ils n'ont pas songé à la noble veuve, qui, ayant associé son intelligence à l'intelligence purifiée de son mari, sa bonté utile à sa bonté facile, se demande, après tous ces articles douloureux à son cœur d'épouse, si ce sont là les seuls portraits de leur père qu'elle pourra faire lire un jour à ses enfants grandis.

Grâce à vous, mon cher ami, j'espère qu'elle trouvera ici ce qu'elle attend, et je vous en ai une gratitude personnelle très amicale.

JULIETTE ADAM.

In Memoriam.

PRINCE PAUL DEMIDOFF,

DIED 26TH JANUARY, 1885.

R. I. P.

Testimonial of Gratitude

FROM

H. GUEDALLA, LONDON,

FOR HIS ABLE TREATMENT OF THE

AFFECTING THE INTERESTS OF MORE
THAN THREE MILLIONS OF JEWS
RESIDING THERE.

1885.

P R E F A C E .



MADAME JULIETTE ADAM, of the *Nouvelle Revue*, has protested in the following ably-written letter to the Paris *Figaro* against the biographical articles that have been written upon the late Prince Demidoff, completely ignoring his noble career during the last nineteen years of his life. Madame Adam proves that she is, first of all and above all, a large-hearted woman. There have been converts from pleasure to penance since Saint Augustin. Prince Paul Demidoff was one. Within the last nine years he spent £145,000 in various charitable and educational foundations. His private gifts to the poor in St. Petersburg and elsewhere are notorious, and his gold mines and ironworks in the Ural give regular employment to 13,000 men. I have translated the able vindication of the late Prince by the talented Madame Adam into English to demonstrate,

as was her intention, to the noble widow, Princess Demidoff, that we wish to pourtray her own intelligence, so long associated with the purified intelligence of her husband, and her useful goodness with his ready goodness, as a grateful testimony to be exhibited at a future day to their children.

I forwarded to the late Prince a splendidly-bound copy of the translation made at my expense of his "Jewish Question in Russia," and he at the commencement of May, 1884, sent me the following telegram from Pratolino :—

"I have received your communication. I am extremely flattered that a simple little work such as mine has been valued at more than its worth. Receive the expression of my profound gratitude."

H. GUEDALLA.

19 *February*, 1885.

P.S.—"By a Royal Decree, dated the 31st December, 1884, H.M. the King of Italy conferred the title of Prince upon all the sons, and of Princess on all the daughters of Paul Demidoff, with this distinction, that the eldest son should bear the title of

Prince of San Donato, and the other children that of Prince and Princess Demidoff of San Donato.

“The mortal remains of the late Prince were embalmed, and, by a special authorisation of the Prefect, were provisionally deposited in the Chapel of the Medici, in the Park of Pratolino, where the Prince was accustomed to have mass celebrated every Sunday at his own expense for his Catholic servants and the inhabitants of the neighbouring village.

“In order to comprehend the grave loss which Florence has sustained, it will suffice to mention that in addition to the enormous sums so munificently bestowed by the deceased upon the city, the expenditure for his household amounted to 100,000 francs, or £4000 a month.

“The Municipal Junta, at their meeting of yesterday, voted an address of condolence to Made. Hélène Demidoff, Princess of San Donato, in the name of the City of Florence.”



To MR. MAGNARD,

Chief Editor of the FIGARO.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Will you allow me, after the recent noisy resuscitation of Prince Paul Demidoff and his "*gaie jeunesse*," to introduce you to another Paul Demidoff, the one I knew, one who was loved and esteemed by troops of friends, and whose loss is now so bitterly deplored by his widow.

When his gaieties were at their height, Prince Paul Demidoff always found some hours in each week to study with such men as Laboulaye, Franck and Baudrillart.

In 1867, a love match made with the Princess Marie Metchersky weaned him from his life of pleasure. It was at the same time that he exchanged the Paris Embassy for that of Vienna. In 1868, to his great grief, he lost the Princess, after she had given birth to a son, who is living at the present time.

From the date of that event his tastes became completely changed. Many of his friends will still

remember the deep impression which this unexpected death made upon the mind of Paul Demidoff. His sole thoughts and occupations turned to charitable purposes. At Paris he founded the establishment known as the "Ouvroir Sainte Marie," where, until the time of the Commune, from three to four hundred women of the Parisian poor found daily work, and a livelihood that removed them from absolute want.

On his return to Russia, some time in 1869, he again put himself in harness under the Ministry of the Interior, and accepted an inferior position in the little town of Kamenetz, in Podolia. But in 1870, the city of Kieff, having obtained permission to elect its own mayor, enticed him away from Kamenetz, and placed him at the head of what may be called from its political and commercial importance, the third city in Russia.

In 1871, Paul Demidoff again entered the state of matrimony, and espoused the young Princess Helen Troubetzkoï, who accompanied him to Kieff. This lady is the widow that now bemoans the loss of the man who formed, when living, the centre of her thoughts and affections. She retains at least the consolation of having imbued her lamented husband with the most ardent love for a domestic life, sanctified by her presence, and the care of bringing up the five young children he has left behind him, besides the son born of his first marriage with the Princess Marie Metchersky.

Space is wanting to narrate the amount of good

which Paul Demidoff performed in the City of Kieff. We may mention, however, that after the death of the first child of Helen Nikita, he founded a hospital for children, and that the University and the City itself have been again and again the recipients of his bounty. In 1874, he came back to St. Petersburg, and thence he removed to San Donato, which he continued to enrich with works of art. In 1877, when the war with Turkey began, he was sent off again to Kieff, which town, it may be observed, had re-elected him mayor in 1874, a charge which he was unable to accept.

The Government then appointed him Envoy Extraordinary of the establishments founded by the Red Cross, to succour the wounded and sick of the army. For a year and a half he devoted his whole time to the Red Cross at Kieff, and in two other provinces of Russia; his conduct at this period, for devotion and generosity, being beyond all praise. He returned to St. Petersburg in 1880, where he occupied the position of Grand Master of the Hounds to the Court, bestowed upon him in 1873.

In 1881, on the death of the Emperor Alexander II., he resumed more active service at the Ministry of the Interior. His activity at this time was bestowed upon almost every subject that was of interest to his country. He was President of one of the most powerful banks of St. Petersburg (the Russian), President of the Society for the Encouragement of Industry and Trade; he studied

the Jewish question, and in fact every other question that excited public attention. The Oural Mines occupied a large amount of his time. By degrees he introduced into them all the most modern improvements, and was always some years in advance of the Government.

Nor was this all. At his own risk and peril he commenced working certain coal mines north of the Oural, from a conviction that they would one day become the sole resource of a mining industry which now, and for a long time past, has relied exclusively for its fuel upon forests which are fast disappearing from the country.

Always ready to devote his energies to any work of human kindness, he was appointed by the Emperor Alexander II. Curator of the Demidoff Charitable Establishments, founded by one of his ancestors, and on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Piedmont and the Princess Marguerite (now King and Queen of Italy) to Russia, it was Paul Demidoff who was selected by the Court to attend them.

King Victor Emanuel bestowed upon him the title—recognised in Russia—of Prince of San Donato, and awarded to him successively the two grand cordons of St. Maurice and Lazarus, and of the Iron Crown.

The people of Florence presented him in 1879 with a Gold Medal, bearing his effigy and that of the Princess, accompanied by an address, which was carried to San Donato by the committee that organised

the presentation. The cortége was, for this solemnity, composed of all the corporations of workmen of the City, with their banners, and that same year the municipality of Florence enrolled the Prince and Princess as honorary citizens.

He received in Russia, at various periods of his life, proofs of confidence in the shape of addresses, thanks, and the grand cordon of Stanislas.

He never forgot Italy, where he had purchased a superb estate, formerly belonging to the Medicis, Pratolino, which he filled in the same way as he had done at San Donato, with works of art.

He continued at Florence that activity in charitable pursuits which he had displayed elsewhere, and schools, economic kitchens, night asylums, educational and commercial establishments, and buildings for the aid of the unfortunate sprang up under his care. It may in fact be affirmed that never did the needy knock in vain at the gates of Prince Paul Demidoff.

France also, by way of acknowledgment of his generosity during the war of 1870, and of his constant solicitude for the French at St. Petersburg, conferred upon him the title of Commander of the Legion of Honour.

For several years past he had been suffering from a serious affection of the liver. A great improvement, which occurred two months ago, induced among us the hope of a cure. Everything, indeed, attached him to a life devoted exclusively to family

affections; his fondness for his wife, who simply adored him, and for his children, who were always about him, when, on the 24th January, he lost consciousness, after saying to the Princess the simple words "*au revoir!*" into which he threw all the expression of his gratitude and love. He died on the 26th, at half-past three, leaving his whole household overwhelmed with grief. His body, provisionally interred in the chapel at Pratolino, will, in accordance with his last wishes, be conveyed to his Works at Oural, in the month of June. His widow will accompany his remains on this last journey upon earth, and will be certain to find consolation among the simple hearts who loved Paul Demidoff as a benefactor.

Permit me, my dear friend, to terminate this narrative with a few brief remarks. It appears to me that the men of the upper ranks, who are desirous of obtaining an exceptional position or individuality, may, for the most part, be divided into two classes; the laborious, who, when once they have reached the height of their ambition, do their best to regain the time they deem they have lost by plunging into gaiety; and the devotees of pleasure, who, satiated with its attractions, endeavour to regain their lost time by honourable labour, to which they henceforth devote themselves.

Prince Paul Demidoff belonged to this latter class. Those who spoke of the friend of their youth had undoubtedly a right to recall the errors he might

have committed ; but they did not think of the noble widow, who, having associated her own intelligence with the purified intelligence of her husband—her useful goodness with his ready goodness—would naturally ask, after perusing all those articles so painful to her wifely feeling, whether they portrayed the only features of their father which she would like at some distant date to exhibit to his children ?

Thanks to you, my dear friend, I trust she will find in this sheet what she has a right to expect, and which I shall be personally grateful to you for showing her.

JULIETTE ADAM.



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